



Diversity Strategy 2018-23

Inclusive. Valued. Innovative.



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

PURPOSE *To achieve our vision of efficiently delivering high quality and connected services to all generations of veterans, their dependants and the wider veteran community, we need a diverse workforce that is inclusive, respectful and innovative.*

We are connected and work together with five key diversity areas of focus:



Gender equality

DVA will continue to champion gender equity within the APS and focus on maintaining gender balance by developing a workforce that is reflective of contemporary society



Disability and Carers

DVA is committed to supporting people with disability and those with carer responsibilities to support their wellbeing and maximise their potential so they can participate as equal citizens within DVA and the wider Australian society



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

DVA recognises the unique place that the first Australians hold in our society. The Department is committed to the Australian Government's Closing the Gap agenda supporting practical reconciliation



Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

DVA is committed to bringing people together from different backgrounds to utilise their knowledge and experiences to ensure we create innovative ways to engage our clients

LGBTIQA+

LGBTIQA+

DVA is working towards a culture and adopting practices that allows all employees, regardless of their orientation, gender identity or intersex status, to bring their whole selves to work

GENDER EQUALITY

DVA will foster a workforce that is reflective of contemporary society by harnessing the best talent through challenging assumptions and developing a culture of inclusion that provides both men and women with access to equal opportunities to develop and lead.

Actions:

Promote our Gender Equality Action Plan (2017-2019) (the Plan) and build an understanding of the actions outlined within the Plan.

Build awareness of domestic and family violence (DFV) by offering education and awareness sessions, promoting our DFV Policy and implementing our DFV Hotline.

Promote White Ribbon and International Women's Day.

Encourage both men and women to attend the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Staff Network.

Promote and support our Diversity Champion.

DISABILITY AND CARERS

DVA will adopt practices that ensure people with disability enjoy the same opportunities and choices as everyone else, by identifying and breaking down barriers which prevent people with disability from participating in our society.

Actions:

Review and promote the "Protocols for engaging with people with disability in the development and delivery of DVA Business".

Encourage people who identify with a disability to attend the Diversity and Inclusion Staff network meetings.

Ensure that the department is a member of the Australian Network of Disability (AND).

Promote the RecruitAbility scheme to all employees and potential employees.

Promote the role of carers and the use of flexible work arrangements.

Promote and support our Diversity Champion.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER

DVA will nurture an inclusive working environment that recognises and celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their diverse cultural identity, communities, economic empowerment and self-determination.

Actions:

Continue our reconciliation journey by implementing our current Reconciliation Action Plan (Galumbany) and developing a new plan for 2018-2020.

Maintain an Indigenous Affairs intranet page.

Provide cultural awareness sessions to all staff.

Encourage our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate in the D&I Staff Network.

Review Indigenous employment by location.

Promote Reconciliation Week and host an event.

Promote and support our Indigenous Champion.

CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE (CALD)

DVA will promote a positive and inclusive working environment that capitalises on the knowledge, skills and experiences of all staff to drive our transformation process.

Actions:

Investigate the CALD initiatives employed by other Australian Public Service agencies.

Promote and encourage participation in Harmony Day events across the country.

Encourage staff from CALD backgrounds to participate in our Diversity and Inclusion Staff Network.

Promote and support our CALD Champion.

LGBTIQA+

DVA will foster an environment in which staff who identify as LGBTIQA+ feel valued by promoting an inclusive working environment, free from all forms of prejudice and that is reflective of modern Australian society.

Actions:

Encourage staff who identify as LGBTIQA+ to participate in the Diversity and Inclusion Staff Network.

Promote and support our Diversity Champion.

Promote the Australian Tax Office's LGBTIQA+ network, ATOMIC, to assist our LGBTIQA+ staff develop networks across the APS.

Promote the *Out for Australia* Mentoring Program, including their networking events.



? WHAT'S NEXT

Promote awareness and implement the DFV Hotline.

Update our Equity and Diversity intranet page to ensure that staff have access to information regarding gender equality.

Promote the use of flexible work arrangements.

Ensure there is a gender balance on selection panels.

Review the gender spread of employees across the APS/EL & SES levels.

DVA to work towards meeting the criteria of being a Workplace Gender Equality Agency.

? WHAT'S NEXT

Update our Equity and Diversity intranet page to ensure that staff have access to information regarding disability and carers.

Promote International Day of Peoples with Disability.

Monitor the accessibility requests that Working Environment and Consulting (WEC) receive and the time taken to provide people with Disability with the equipment they require to able to fully participate in the workforce.

Monitor diversity status of candidates and the usage of RecruitAbility.

? WHAT'S NEXT

Promote and host a NAIDOC week event

Update our Indigenous employment and retention strategy.

Engage an external provider to deliver cultural awareness training to meet demand.

Hold a Diversity Panel includes a guest speaker who identifies as Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander.

Monitor diversity status of candidates applying for positions at DVA.

Explore opportunities to create identified and special measures positions.

? WHAT'S NEXT

Develop content for our Equity and Diversity intranet page that outlines services available to staff should they require assistance in engaging with people from CALD backgrounds.

Hold a Diversity Panel that includes a guest speaker who is from a CALD background.

Explore options for cross-cultural training/ unconscious bias training to breakdown stereotypes and address feedback received from 2017 CALD focus groups.

Monitor diversity status of candidates applying for positions at DVA.

Hold a CALD focus group in August 2018.

? WHAT'S NEXT

Promote Wear it Purple Day.

Engage a senior APS leader who identifies as being a part of the LGBTIQA+ community to be apart of the Diversity Panel.

Explore membership with *Pride In Diversity* and promote their resources to staff. (employer support program for LGBTI workplace inclusion)

Promote membership of Defence Gay and Lesbian Information Service (DEGLIS).

Promote membership of APS Pride Network – currently facilitated as a closed Facebook group.

Promote the resources available through the LGBTI National Health alliance.

⊘ CONSTRAINTS

Resource constraints—one employee is managing all Diversity initiatives, which will limit the number and impact of activities over time.

Dispersed workforce—state locations have indicated lower levels of satisfaction in relation to Diversity. This is reflective of the importance for coordinating and including them in future diversity events within the confines of return on investment principles.

⊘ CONSTRAINTS

Resource constraints – as outlined under Gender Equality

Dispersed workforce – as outlined under Gender Equality

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Fiscal constraints - there is no dedicated Diversity budget.

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✓ MEASURES OF SUCCESS

1. An increase in overall response to the following question in the 2018 APS Employee Census.

“My agency is committed to creating a diverse workforce (e.g. gender, age, cultural and linguistic background, disability, indigenous, LGBTI).” (Only 62% of staff believe that the agency is committed to creating a diverse workforce).

2. Statistical data reported to the APSC continues to reflect that DVA is meeting the 50% target of women in leadership roles.

3. Composition of recruitment panels reflect a gender balance.

4. Positive results reported in the Employee Census under wellbeing: *“how satisfied are you with your ability to access and use flexible working arrangements.”*

✓ MEASURES OF SUCCESS

1. An increase in positive responses from people who identify as having an ongoing disability to the following questions in the 2018 APS Employee Census:

“The people in my workgroup behave in an accepting manner towards people from diverse backgrounds.” (2017 response, 75%, 10% below DVA average).

“I receive the respect I deserve from my colleagues at work.” (2017 response: 55%, 17% below DVA average).

“My agency is committed to creating a diverse workforce (e.g. gender, age, cultural and linguistic background, disability, Indigenous, LGBTI+)” (2017 response 49%, 13% below DVA average).

2. Positive results reported in the Employee Census under wellbeing: *“how satisfied are you with your ability to access and use flexible working arrangements.”*

✓ MEASURES OF SUCCESS

1. Improved employment outcomes. As of March 2018 DVA's Indigenous employment figure is 1.3%. Our current target is 2.5%.

2. An increase in positive responses from people who identify as Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander to the following question in the 2018 APS Employee Census:

“The people in my workgroup behave in an accepting manner towards people from diverse backgrounds.” (2017 response: 72%, 13% below DVA average)

3. An increase in the number of individuals who have participated in cultural awareness training. Target: 75% by June 2019. *(The 2017 Employee Census indicated that only 30% of DVA staff have attended Cultural Awareness training in the last 5 years).*

4. An Increase in the Indigenous Employment rate in comparison to other like agencies. *(As of April 2018 DVA's Indigenous Employment statistic is 1.23% reflecting a decline of .57% since December 2016).*

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“My agency is committed to creating a diverse workforce (e.g. gender, age, cultural and linguistic background, disability, indigenous, LGBTI).” (Only 62% of staff believe that the agency is committed to creating a diverse workforce).

2. An increase in the positive statements provided by CALD staff at a focus group to be held in August 2018 in comparison to August 2017.

3. Staff attendance and participation in Harmony Day.

4. CALD staff participation in the D&I Staff Network.

✓ MEASURES OF SUCCESS

1. An increase in overall response to the following question in the 2018 APS Employee Census.

“My agency is committed to creating a diverse workforce (e.g. gender, age, cultural and linguistic background, disability, indigenous, LGBTI).” (Only 54% of staff who identify as LGBTQIA+ believe that the agency is committed to creating a diverse workforce).

2. An increase in the positive responses to the following questions from individuals who preferred not to disclose their sexual orientation:

“My agency is committed to creating a diverse workforce (e.g. gender, age, cultural and linguistic background, disability, indigenous, LGBTI).” (Only 45% of people in this group believe that the agency is committed to creating a diverse workforce).

3. Staff attendance and participation in Wear it Purple Day.

4. LGBTIQA+ staff participation in the D&I Staff network.